

Message Text

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73

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05

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USIA-06 SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 /102 W

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R 051511Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3006

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, AG, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH-ALGERIAN BILATERAL TRADE PROBLEMS

1. ON SEPTEMBER 3, FRENCH MINISTER OF EXTERNAL COMMERCE, NORBERT SEGARD, VISITED TWELFTH INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR, CURRENTLY UNDERWAY IN ALGIERS. BILATERAL TALKS DURING VISIT FOCUSED MAINLY ON ISSUE OF TRADE IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH, DURING FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1975, AMOUNTED TO ROUGHLY 3 BILLION FRANCS IN FAVOR OF FRENCH (COMPARED WITH 1.5 BILLION DEFICIT IN FRENCH FAVOR FOR ALL OF 1975). ALGERIANS CONTINUED TO PRESS REQUEST THAT FRANCE IMPORT MORE OIL FROM ALGERIA. ABOUT HALF OF ELF-ERAP PRODUCTION IN ALGERIA IS NOW SOLD OUTSIDE OF FRANCE, AND ALGERIANS NOT SATISFIED WITH THIS PROPORTION.

2. FRENCH GENERAL LINE IN REPLY WAS THAT DEFICIT WAS DUE TO HEAVY EQUIPMENT IMPORTS WHICH ARE MUST TO BENEFIT OF ALGERIA AND ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. FRENCH MINISTER DID RESPOND WITH TWO SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS: 1) A COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS TO VISIT ALGIERS TO STUDY IMBALANCE PROBLEM; AND 2) AN INCREASED LEVEL OF FRENCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO HELP

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ALGERIA TO PRODUCE AND SUCCESSFULLY MARKET PRODUCTS IN FRANCE.

3. FRENCH EMBASSY REACTION TO VISIT WAS THAT ALGERIANS MUCH LESS DEMANDING ON SUBJECT OF TRADE IMBALANCE THAN THEY WERE DURING LAST VISIT OF SEGARD TO ALGIERS IN EARLY 1975. IN RESPONSE TO ALGERIAN REQUESTS, SEGARD HAD ASKED ALGERIANS FOR SPECIFICS ON WHAT PRODUCTS THEY WOULD WISH TO SELL IN GREATER QUANTITIES TO FRANCE. HE HAD RECEIVED NO SPECIFIC REPLIES, HOWEVER. FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCE ADDED THAT ALGERIANS DID NOT EVEN HAVE OIL TO SELL AT THIS POINT BECAUSE ALL OIL EXPORT AVAILABILITY WAS COMMITTED FOR MOMENT, MUCH OF IT UNDER TERMS OF RECENT BARTER DEALS. SOURCE NOTED THIS LACK OF SURPLUS CRUDE PROBABLY WENT A LONG WAY IN EXPLAINING ALGERIAN MODERATION DURING TALKS.PARKER

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